

旅

Lǚ
travel

夜

Yè
night

書

Shū
write

懷

Huái
feelings

A POEM BY DÙ FÚ 杜甫

細

Xì
fine/thin

草

Cǎo
grass/plants

微

Wēi
faint

風

Fēng
wind

岸

Àn
shore

危

Wēi
high/precarious

檣

Qíáng
mast

獨

Dú
alone/lone

夜

Yè
night

舟

Zhōu
boat

星

Xīng
stars

垂

Chuí
hang

平

Píng
level

野

Yě
wilderness

闊

Kuò
broad

月

Yuè
moon

湧

Yǒng
gush/bubble

大

Dà
great

江

Jiāng
river

流

Liú
flow

名

Míng
name/fame

豈

Qǐ
how

文

Wén
—literary writings—

章

Zhāng

著

Zhù
make known

官

Guān
office

應

Yīng
must

老

Lǎo
old

病

Bìng
sick

休

Xiū
quit

飄

Piāo
fluttering

飄

Piāo
fluttering

何

Hé
what

所

Suǒ
—be resembled to—

以

Yǐ

天

Tiān
Heaven

地

Dì
Earth

一

Yī
one

沙

Shā
sand

鷗

Ōu
gull

Two Translations

Translation by Stephen Owen

“Writes of what he feels, traveling by night”

Slender grasses, breeze faint on the shore,
Here, the looming mast, the lone night boat.
Stars hang down on the breadth of the plain,
The moon gushes in the great river’s current.
My name shall not be known from my writing;
Sick, growing old, I must yield up my post.
Wind-tossed, fluttering—what is my likeness?
In Heaven and Earth, a single gull of the sands.

From Stephen Owen, *Traditional Chinese Poetry and Poetics: Omen of the World* (Madison: U. of Wisconsin, 1985) 12.

Translation by Burton Watson

“A Traveler at Night Writes His Thoughts”

Delicate grasses, faint wind on the bank;
stark mast, a lone night boat:
stars hang down, over broad fields sweeping;
the moon boils up, on the great river flowing.
Fame—how can my writings win me that?
Office—age and sickness have brought it to an end.
Fluttering, fluttering—where is my likeness?
Sky and earth and one sandy gull.

From Burton Watson, *The Columbia Book of Chinese Poetry: From Early Times to the Thirteenth Century* (New York: Columbia, 1984) 233.